



March 7, 2014

**Letter – Expression of Interest
VIA ECFS**

Chairman Thomas Wheeler
Commissioner Mignon Clyburn
Commissioner Jessica Rosenworcel
Commissioner Ajit Pai
Commissioner Michael O’Rielly
Jonathan Chambers
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW 20024
Washington, DC

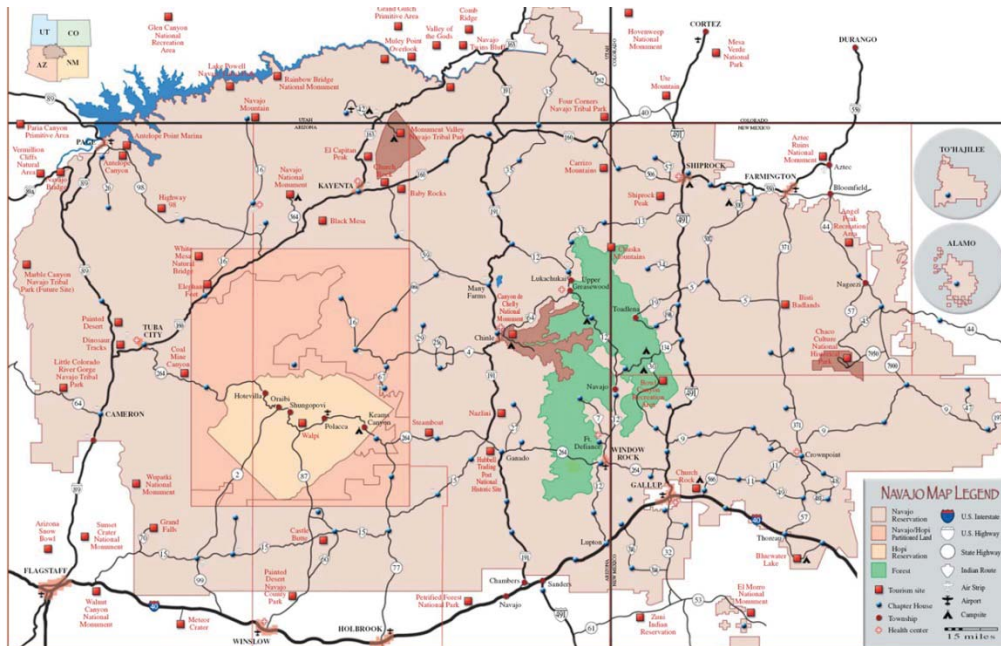
**Re: Expression of Interest – Rural Broadband Experiments
Connect America Fund, WC Docket No. 10-90**

Dear Chairman Wheeler, Commissioners, and Mr. Chambers,

This letter is to express Northern Regional Business Development Office’s interest in participating in the Rural Broadband Experiments announced at the January 30th FCC Open Meeting. While we do not have a project to propose, we take this opportunity to document our local and regional Navajo Nation chapter communities; Montezuma Creek, UT, Aneth UT, Oljato, UT, Mexican Water, UT/AZ, Teec Nos Pos, UT/AZ, Red Mesa, UT/AZ, Dennehotso, UT/AZ, Sweetwater, AZ, and Rock Point AZ’s need for high-speed Internet service. We respectfully ask the Federal Communications Commission to consider our area’s need when making decisions regarding the Rural Broadband Trials and any future initiatives related to the Connect America Fund.

Background

Currently our local and regional area does not have any stable information technology infrastructure to host an infinite number of constituents and/or customer needs for internet service. The need for a stable environment such as fiber optics is direly needed as there are currently only the ‘temporary type fixes’ using satellite and/or microwave based connections established for the various users from the different fields; economic and community development to include commercial and industrial businesses along with housing and transportation services, governmental services including education–health–social service providers and environmental–law enforcement protection, and natural resource extraction/management. The uppermost (northern) region of the Navajo Nation, bordering the states of Arizona and Utah, depicted below is within our outreach area.



Geographic Territory

Connecting the dots from Lake Powell Navajo Tribal Park down to Navajo Mountain then across to Baby Rocks then westward to the Carizzo Mountain and northward to the Four Corners National Monument and following the San Juan River to the State of Utah's border essentially covers the region that our office services.

Proposed technology

Definitely, our need is that of having a fiber optic 'highway' that will not only feed our area but can extend itself throughout the Navajo Nation with an infrastructure that can service the schools, health, and community needs, including economic development. The businesses within this region rely on cellular towers and telephone services that are quite limited whereby simple electric outages can cause businesses to literally stop sales of gas and essential needs when the internet goes down. If the FCC can do anything about the limited services provided (ISP broadband width) by the Frontier Communications on the Navajo Nation, seeing that it is a monopoly that extends itself just beyond the borders also limiting the little cities along the Navajo and State of Utah, that would seem to be a great step in the right direction along with the fiber optic infrastructure.

Existing Providers

Frontier Communications, located within the heart of the Navajo Nation in St. Michaels Arizona, is the only land provider that I am aware of along with the cellular providers; Cellular One, AT&T, Commnet, Verizon and I believe Comcast. The Navajo Tribal Utility Authority has been working on establishing themselves as well but has yet to call itself open. Frontier does host a bandwidth but it must be too small or narrow as it is very congested when all the customers are online and it slows everyone down. I understand the Navajo Nation Division of Education has to



inform all other tribal departments to stay off line while one department hosts VOIP on particular days. This lends itself to show how the situation affects others across the Navajo Nation, including hospital and clinics, schools, when the internet goes down.

Local or Tribal Government Participation

Navajo Nation Information Technology, Dine College, Navajo Technical University, Ute Mountain Utes, Navajo Oil & Gas Company, Aneth, Dennehotso, Mexican Water, Oljato, Red Mesa, Rock Point, Sweetwater, Navajo Mountain and Teec Nos Pos Chapters with associated communities, Navajo Program for Self Reliance, Navajo Workforce Development, Utah Navajo Health Systems.

List of Anchor Institutions

Schools: Montezuma Creek High School, Montezuma Creek Elementary School, College of Eastern University Branch in Montezuma Creek, UT, Aneth Community School, Red Mesa High School, Red Mesa Elementary School, Teec Nos Pos Community School, Navajo Technical University – Teec Nos Pos, AZ Branch, Dennehotso Elementary School, Monument Valley High School, Navajo Mountain High School

Libraries: Montezuma Creek Library

Healthcare: Utah Navajo Health System – Montezuma Creek & Monument Valley Clinics, Four Corners Regional Health Center – Red Mesa

Local/Regional Offices: Northern Regional Business Development Office, Navajo Utah Commission Office, Navajo Department of Workforce Development, Navajo Program for Self Reliance

Community Centers: Aneth-Mexican Water-Red Mesa-Teec Nos Pos-Dennehotso-Sweetwater-Oljato-Rock Point-Navajo Mountain Navajo Nation Chapters

Businesses: Navajo Nation Oil & Gas Company, Resolute Energy, Red Mesa Trading Company, Montezuma Well Service, Maryboy Construction, Lansing Construction, HT Well Service, JR Construction

Thank you for considering our Expression of Interest in your decisions about the amount of funding that will be allocated in the Rural Broadband Experiments. We commend the FCC in this effort to connect rural communities and are ready to help you close the digital divide.

Sincerely,

Dorothy A. Smith

Dorothy A. Smith,
Sr. Economic Development Specialist
Northern Regional Business Development Office